



**Winston H. Hickox**  
Secretary for  
Environmental  
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# State Water Resources Control Board

**Division of Clean Water Programs**  
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**Gray Davis**  
Governor

*The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our website at [www.swrcb.ca.gov](http://www.swrcb.ca.gov).*

October 2, 2002

To: Local Agencies and Other Interested Parties

## CLARIFICATION REGARDING SECONDARY CONTAINMENT TESTING DEADLINE

The purpose of this letter is to inform you about our responses to important questions that our office has been receiving regarding the secondary containment testing deadline. Regulations regarding secondary containment testing are detailed in the Health and Safety Code section 25284.1, subdivision (a)(4)(B) and in the California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 2637.

- **Does the re-test and repair of failing secondary containment systems have to be completed by the January 1, 2003 deadline?** The first periodic test of all secondary containment systems installed prior to January 1, 2001 must be performed by January 1, 2003. However, if a system does not pass the test and repairs are needed, local agencies may allow owners/operators time for repairs and re-testing consistent with the agency's permit, repair, and re-test requirements. In such cases, the secondary containment repairs and re-test may be conducted after the January 1, 2003 deadline.
- **Can an owner/operator declare a secondary containment component "failing" without performing a test?** It has been brought to our attention that certain brands of secondary containment components are showing widespread failure of secondary containment testing. It is also our understanding that some components such as sumps and under-dispenser containment can be identified as "failing" without testing, based on visual observation. Under these circumstances, we recommend that owners/operators submit a completed copy of the "Secondary Containment Testing Report Form" by the January 1, 2003 deadline identifying those components that have been tested and have passed and those components that are declared "failing" based on either visual inspection or other evidence, such as a pattern of failures observed at other facilities. Owners/operators should also notify the agency how they intend to address the failing systems and follow up by applying for appropriate permits. Owners/operators must comply with the notification and reporting requirements for the parts of the system they intend to test.
- **What is the deadline for completing enhanced leak detection (ELD) for "Untestable Secondary Containment"?** Enhanced leak detection testing may be used in lieu of secondary containment testing if it is determined that the secondary containment is untestable by virtue of design. This test must be completed before January 1, 2003.

Local Agencies and  
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For additional information regarding secondary containment testing, please refer to Local Guidance 160 (LG 160), which is available on our website at:

<http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/cwphome/ust/docs/lgs/lg-160.html>

If you have questions regarding this letter, please contact Mr. Raed Mahdi at (916) 341-5871 or by email at [mahdir@cwpc.swrcb.ca.gov](mailto:mahdir@cwpc.swrcb.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

[Original signed by:]  
Elizabeth L. Haven, Manager  
Underground Storage Tank Program